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THE NEW MUTANTS™

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Stan Lee PRESENTS THE NEW MUTANTS--
CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND BOB McLEOD

CHRIS CLAREMONT
SCRIPTER

SAL BUSCEMA
PENCILER

BOB McLEOD
FINISHER

GLYNIS WEIN, colorist
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, letterer

LOUISE JONES
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

BRRING:BRRING:BRRIN KLIK

HELLO?

WHO'S

HI, STEVIE.

SCARING

YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS.

YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT.

SOON, I'LL COME TO GET IT.

STEVIE?

'BYE!

BZZZZZZZZZZZZ

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THE SOONER THE BETTER, YOU LITTLE CREEP--

--SO I CAN RIP YOUR *HEART* OUT!

ANOTHER CALL?

YES.

THE SAME AS THE OTHERS?

YES!!

STEVIE, SUMMON THE POLICE AGAIN-- PLEASE!

WHY BOTHER, SHAN? THEY'VE ALREADY SAID THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING.

VERBAL HARASSMENT SIMPLY ISN'T A SERIOUS ENOUGH CRIME.

PERHAPS THE NEW MUTANTS-- OR THE X-MEN-- CAN HELP?

YOU CAN, SHAN-- BY STAYING OUT OF IT.

THIS IS *MY* PROBLEM. I'LL HANDLE IT MY OWN WAY.

C'EST ABSURDE! NOUS SOMMES VOTRE AMIS-- YOUR FRIENDS, STEVIE! WE CARE ABOUT YOU--

OH!

EXCUSE ME, MISS HUNTER-- HI, SHAN-- AM I INTRUDING?

PETER BRISTOW-- HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE?

DOOR WAS OPEN.

DANCE

I FIGURED I'D TIDY UP THE STUDIO BEFORE CLASS.

THANKS, PETER. I APPRECIATE IT.

WE'LL TALK MORE TONIGHT, OKAY, SHAN? I'M SORRY I SNAPPED AT YOU. SCOOT NOW, CHILD, XAVIER'S EXPECTING YOU.

PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...

THIS IS FOR YOU, RAHNE...

CATCH!

IT'S A WICKED TOSS...

...DESIGNED TO KEEP THE FRISBEE JUST OUT OF WOLFSBANE'S REACH, NO MATTER HOW HIGH SHE JUMPS.

BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY WOLF--

--INDEED, NO WOLF AT ALL--

--AS, IN MID-LEAP, SHE TAKES ON A HALF-HUMAN ASPECT...

...LONG ENOUGH TO SNARE THE FRISBEE...

...AND RETURN IT TO HER FRIENDS.

SHE'S FAR FROM FINISHED, THOUGH. SHE SHIFTS BACK TO LUPINE FORM...

...AND RACES FULL-TILT AFTER HER TOSS...

...MOVING WITH SUCH BLINDING SPEED...

...THAT SHE'S ABLE TO SNATCH THE FRISBEE...

...OUT OF THE HANDS OF ITS INTENDED RECEIVER--MUCH TO HIS SURPRISE.

=WHUNFF!=

SCORE ONE F'R THE LITTLE LADY, *huh*, BOBBY?

I WISH I HAD A CAMERA.

I AM GLAD YOU DON'T.

LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN DO AS WELL AS RAHNE, SAM.

NO SWEAT, PAL!

CANNONBALL'S MUTANT POWER...

GOT IT?

...SENDS HIM STREAKING THROUGH THE SKY.

CRIPES -- THAT TREE! AH CAN'T DODGE!

WHAMMO!

AH'M NOT HURT -- AH CAN'T BE HURT WHEN AH'M BLASTIN' -- BUT AH LOOK LIKE A PRIZE JERK. WHAT'S THE POINT O' BEIN' CANNONBALL IF AH CAN'T EVEN MAKE A LOUSY TURN?!

STUDENTS, THIS IS PROFESSOR XAVIER.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN MY STUDY, AT ONCE.

SHOOT, WITH MY LUCK, AH PROBABLY SMASHED THE PROFESSOR'S PET TREE.

AH'M STILL NOT USED TO HIS TELEPATHIC PROJECTIONS.

THEY SCARE THE BEANS OUTTA ME.

EVERY TIME I SEE XAVIER, I WANT TO RUN AWAY AND HIDE -- OR FACE HIM WITH MY KNIFE. TRY AS I MIGHT...

...I CANNOT FORGET THAT, NOT LONG AGO, HE TRIED HIS BEST TO KILL ME.

AWAITING THEM INSIDE THE MANSION IS LILANDRA -- EXPATRIATE EMPRESS OF THE ALIEN SHI'AR... AND XAVIER'S TRUE LOVE.

THEIR REACTIONS TO HER PRESENCE ARE AS VARIED AS THE CHILDREN THEMSELVES.

YOU LOOK AS THOUGH YOU'VE BEEN ENJOYING YOURSELVES. THERE WILL BE MULLED CIDER AND SANDWICHES FOR YOU IN THE LIVING ROOM AFTER CHARLES HAS FINISHED HIS TALK. I'LL SEE YOU THEN.

ROBERTO DaCOSTA.

YOU ARE TOO KIND, GRACIOUS LADY.

SAM GUTHRIE.

AH KNOW SHE'S A FRIEND...

... BUT SHE STILL GIVES ME THE WILLIES.

RAHNE SINCLAIR.

Y'R MAJESTY, Y' SHOULD NA' BE DOIN' THE WORK OF A COMMON HOUSEMAID. 'TIS NA' RIGHT!

DANIELLE MOONSTAR.

WHY NOT, RAHNE? DON'T WE RATE IT?

ALWAYS THE REBEL, *eh*, DANI? YOU REMIND ME OF MYSELF.

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING SO PROMPTLY.

SIR, SHAN IS NA' HERE.

WE WILL WAIT FOR HER, THEN.

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? IT'S NOT FAIR -- XAVIER CAN READ OUR MINDS, SPY ON OUR EVERY SECRET, BUT WE KNOW NOTHING OF HIS.

AH'M GONNA GET IT, AH KNOW AH AM.

PARDON, M'SIEU -- HAVE I MISSED ANYTHING?

NO, SHAN. HOWEVER, NOW THAT THE *NEW MUTANTS* ARE ASSEMBLED...

...I SHALL BEGIN.

AS YOU KNOW, MY ACTIONS IN RECENT MONTHS HAVE BEEN GOVERNED BY THE FACT THAT I WAS POSSESSED BY A MALEVOLENT ALIEN LIFEFORM.

THE BROOD ARE A PARASITCAL SPECIES.

WHENEVER POSSIBLE, THEY SEEK GENETICALLY SUPERIOR HOSTS FOR THEIR EGGS. TO THIS END, THE EMBRYO IMPLANTED WITHIN ME SUBCONSCIOUSLY PROMPTED MY DECISION TO RE-OPEN THIS SCHOOL AND GATHER YOU AS MY STUDENTS.

THE NEW MUTANTS WERE TO BECOME LIVING HOSTS FOR ITS OFFSPRING.

FORTUNATELY, THE ALIEN WAS DESTROYED BEFORE ITS PLAN REACHED FRUITION. *

*SEE X-MEN #167 -- L.

BUT WHILE THAT ORIGINAL DECISION WAS TAINTED, I BELIEVE IT WAS THE RIGHT AND PROPER ONE TO MAKE.

YOU ARE *MUTANTS*, POSSESSING EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES.

FOR YOUR OWN WELFARE -- AS WELL AS SOCIETY'S -- YOU MUST LEARN THE PROPER USAGE OF THEM. I CAN TEACH YOU.

SOME OF YOU DO NOT TRUST ME -- WITH GOOD REASON. UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE BROOD EMBRYO, I TRIED TO KILL YOU.

THOSE DAYS ARE PAST. I AM MYSELF AGAIN. BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR RELUCTANCE TO TRUST ME NOW. I WILL NOT FORCE YOU TO STAY...

...BUT I HOPE YOU WILL.

I'VE NEVER HEARD HIM SPEAK FROM THE *HEART* BEFORE. THERE WERE TIMES I WONDERED IF HE EVEN *HAD* A HEART.

I SPEAK FOR MYSELF, PROFESSOR...

...AND I BELIEVE FOR MY FRIENDS.

WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN US WASN'T YOUR FAULT, AND WE -- WHO'VE BEEN UNFAIRLY CONDEMNED OURSELVES -- HAVE NO RIGHT TO DO THE SAME TO YOU.

WE MAY NOT WORK OUT, BUT WE ALL -- YOU AND US -- DESERVE A DECENT CHANCE.

SO, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, WE'LL STAY.

SHAN, IS ANYTHING WRONG?

CONTRARY TO "POPULAR" THOUGHT, I DO NOT EAVESDROP ON MY STUDENTS' THOUGHTS, BUT I CANNOT HELP NOTICING THE CONSIDERABLE SURFACE AGITATION IN YOURS.

IT IS *STEVIE HUNTER*. I FEAR SHE IS IN DANGER.

SOMEONE HAS BEEN TELEPHONING HER, MAKING VAGUE THREATS. NEITHER THE POLICE NOR THE TELEPHONE COMPANY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND THIS *COCHON*, OR STOP HIS CALLS. I OFFERED AID, STEVIE REFUSED.

I MEAN TO GO AHEAD REGARDLESS.

SHE HAS RISKED HER LIFE FOR US IN THE PAST-- CAN WE DO ANY LESS FOR HER?

COUNT ME IN, SHAN, WITH OR WITHOUT THE PROFESSOR'S BLESSING.

PART OF ME KINDA HOPES HE SAYS, NO.

I HEARD THAT--! AS I SUSPECT DANI INTENDED.

SHE'S DELIBERATELY CHALLENGING ME! REBELLION IS NATURAL AT HER AGE BUT SHE'S CARRYING THINGS TOO FAR. I MUST DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM--AND SOON.

ARE YOU ALL IN AGREEMENT WITH SHAN?

YESSIR.

VERY WELL. DEVISE A PLAN OF ACTION AND SUBMIT IT TO ME FOR EVALUATION AND APPROVAL.

THIS ISN'T A GAME, PROFESSOR...

...OR A CLASSROOM EXERCISE. STEVIE'S LIFE MAY BE AT STAKE.

TRUE, DANI--BUT SOMETHING MAY BE LEARNED FROM EVERY SITUATION, WHETHER REAL OR ARTIFICIAL, DEADLY OR BENIGN.

ONLY A FOOL REFUSES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT. OR WASTE YOUR STRENGTH IN UNNECESSARY, POINTLESS CONFRONTATIONS. I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY, DANIELLE.

STOP TREATING ME LIKE ONE.

DANIELLE SEEMED QUITE TENSE WHEN SHE LEFT. DID YOU TWO ARGUE?

SHE CONFRONTS ME AT EVERY TURN, LIL, SOMETIMES OVER THE MOST TRIVIAL OF THINGS.

WHAT IS SHE TRYING TO PROVE?

SHE'S AFRAID. OF HERSELF AND HER POWERS, OF THIS NEW LIFE, OF FAILURE, OF... SUCCESS. SHE DEALS WITH THAT FEAR BY ATTACKING -- DEFYING -- THE STRONGEST AUTHORITY FIGURE AVAILABLE.

YOU SOUND AS THOUGH YOU SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE.

I WASN'T ALWAYS AN EMPRESS, MY LOVE.

YOU FEEL UNUSUALLY TENSE YOURSELF. DOES THIS HELP?

WONDERFULLY.

HOW WILL YOU DEAL WITH HER?

ONCE -- BY SIMPLY OVERPOWERING HER WITH MY POWER AND THE FORCE OF MY PERSONALITY. BUT NO LONGER.

THESE ARE CHILDREN -- FAR YOUNGER AND LESS EXPERIENCED THAN THE X-MEN -- RAISED IN A MORE REBELLIOUS AGE. THE DAY MAY COME WHEN I ASK THEM TO RISK -- AND PERHAPS, SACRIFICE -- THEIR LIVES. SUCH LOYALTY COMES, NOT FROM FEAR, BUT RESPECT.

AND SUCH RESPECT MUST BE EARNED, ON BOTH SIDES.

BUT I SUSPECT YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT.

I, AND EVERY LEADER -- OR TEACHER -- WORTH THE NAME.

LILANDRA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THAT TICKLES!

I'M MAKING YOU LAUGH, BELOVED. YOU SHOULD INDULGE MORE OFTEN, IT'LL DO YOU THE WORLD OF GOOD.

AS WILL THIS.

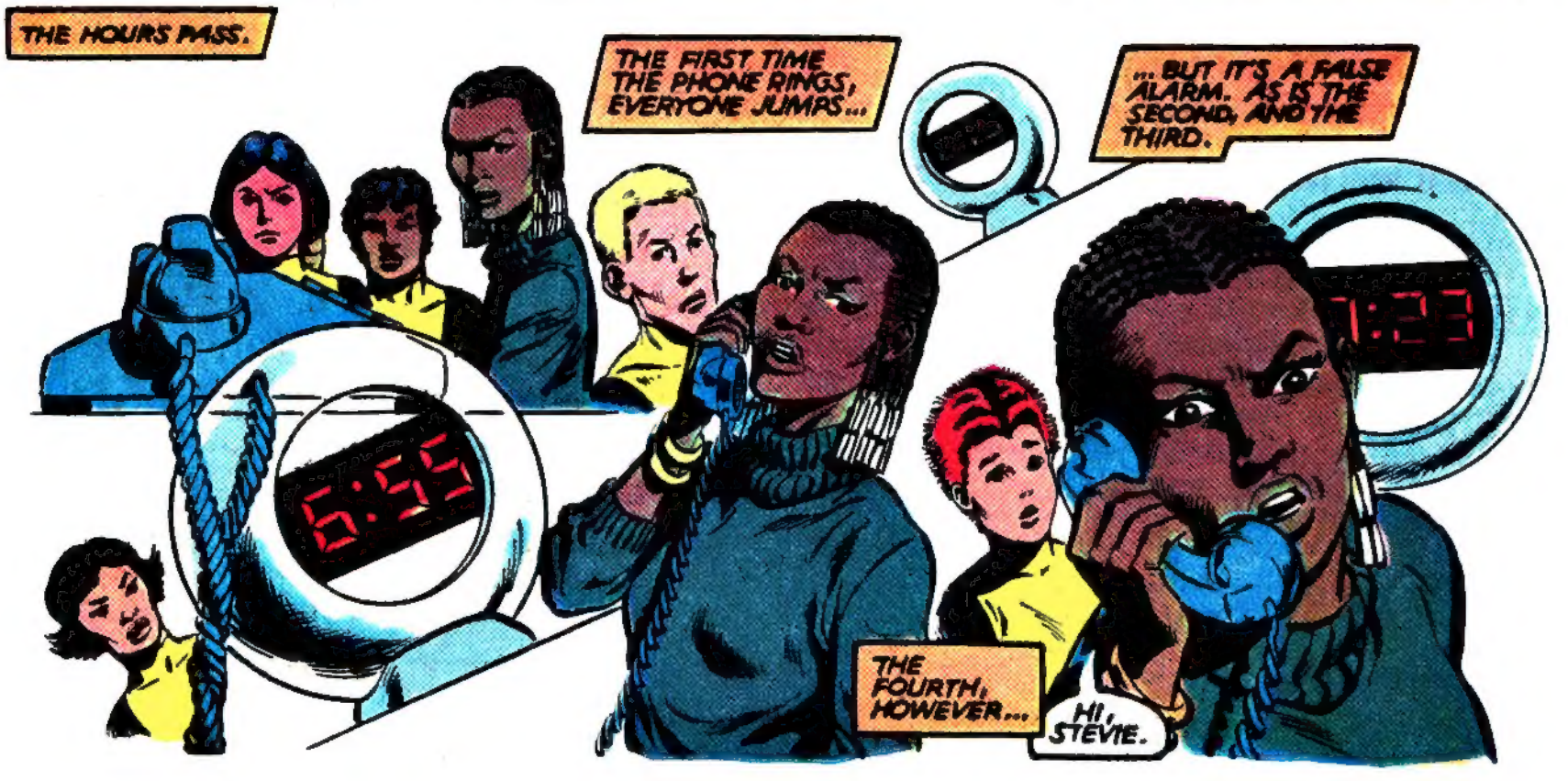
LATER, AT STEVIE'S APARTMENT...
BOOKS
RELI

SO WHAT'S THAT GIZMO S'POSED TO DO, BOBBY?
IT'S A PHONE TRACE, SAM. IT CAN TRACK ANY INCOMING CALL TO ITS SOURCE.
THE PROFESSOR HELPED ME BUILT IT.
HOW'S THAT HELP?

I LEFT MY LITTLE BROTHER AND SISTER IN NEW YORK WITH FATHER BOWEN. IF OUR MANIAC SHOWS HIMSELF, AT LEAST THEY WILL BE SAFE.
ARE YOU READY, ROBERT?

STM, SHAN. AS I WAS TELLING SAM, THIS MODULE WILL GIVE US NOT ONLY THE PHONE NUMBER OF OUR QUARRY...
...BUT HIS LOCATION AS WELL.
I STILL THINK THIS IS UNNECESSARY, BUT I CAN SEE THERE'S NO STOPPING YOU. GO ON.

ALL HE HAS TO DO IS CALL...
...AND WE'VE GOT HIM.


THE HOURS PASS.
THE FIRST TIME THE PHONE RINGS, EVERYONE JUMPS...
...BUT IT'S A FALSE ALARM. AS IS THE SECOND, AND THE THIRD.
THE FOURTH, HOWEVER...
HI, STEVIE.

THEY HAVE HIS ADDRESS BEFORE HE HANGS UP, BUT HE'S LONG GONE BY THE TIME STEVIE'S SAAB REACHES IT.

SCREECH!

OKAY, RAHNE, IT'S UP TO YOU.

SHIFT TO WOLF-FORM AND FIND THE MOST RECENT SCENT.

LET'S HOPE NO ONE'S USED THIS BOOTH SINCE OUR GUY.

THE YOUNG SCOT DOES AS SHE'S TOLD...

...BUT ONE SNIFF OF THE BOOTH'S INTERIOR SENDS HER CHOKING AND GASPING TO THE GROUND.

Och, THE *STENCH!* HOW... HOW COULD PEOPLE BE SO DISGUSTING?!

RAHNE RECOVERS QUICKLY AND, STEELING HERSELF TO THE ORDEAL, TRIES AGAIN...

...COMMUNICATING HER FINDINGS TO DANI...

...THROUGH THE PSIONIC RAPPORT HER CHEYENNE TEAMMATE SHARES WITH ALL ANIMALS.

WE'RE AFTER A BOY, STEVIE -- SOMEONE OUR AGE.

THAT'S CRAZY!

SOON...

THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE, KIDS.

GYMNAS

THE TRAIL LEADS HERE, STEVIE...

...TO THE *HIGH SCHOOL.*

LOOK AT THOSE LIGHTS! REMEMBER WHAT NIGHT THIS IS, YOU GUYS? THAT'S THE SPRING MIXER, THE DANCE WE WERE INVITED TO! *

*IN NM #2 --L.

STAY LOW AN' STAY QUIET, GIRL.
WE DON'T WANT'A BE SPOTTED.
THIS REMINDS ME O' GOIN' HUNTIN' BACK HOME IN KENTUCKY.

AH DON'T MIND TELLIN' YOU, RAHNE, I SURE WISH AH WAS THERE. I SURE DO MISS MOM AN' THE FAMILY.
CAN YOU SEE OKAY?
WRUF!

AH HOPE THAT MEANS, YES.
AH TRIED DANCIN' ONCE, LIKE THAT TRAVOLTA FELLA. I SHOULD'A KNOWN BETTER.

TO RAHNE, THE MOVES AND COSTUMES ARE AS ALIEN, AS DISTURBING...
...AS THE LUPINE PERCEPTIONS THROUGH WHICH SHE VIEWS THEM.

SHE NO LONGER SEES THEM MERELY AS PEOPLE, BUT ALSO AS BRILLIANTLY COLORED PATTERNS OF ENERGY...
...EACH BODY GIVING OFF ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE HEAT-SIGNITURE, REVEALING THAT PERSON'S PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL STATE.

RAHNE'S IN PLACE. SHE'S NEVER BEEN TO A MIXER BEFORE. I THINK SHE'S SCANDALIZED.
WE'D BETTER MAKE OUR ENTRANCE, BEFORE IT GETS TO BE TOO MUCH FOR HER.

DANI, ROBERTO, SHAN-- THIS PLAN OF YOURS SEEMS A BIT THIN TO ME. I MEAN, DO YOU EXPECT ME TO WALK IN THERE AND HAVE MY PRESENCE ALONE FLUSH OUT THE PHONE FREAK?
IT WON'T HURT TO TRY, STEVIE.

BESIDES, THIS IDEA WORKED FOR *THOMAS MAGNUM* ON LAST WEEK'S "*MAGNUM, P.I.*"
C'MON, LADIES, WE'RE WASTING TIME.

THERE IS *DIANA*, THE GIRL WHO INVITED US.
HELLO, DI!
THE BAND IS AWFUL.
ENDURE, ROBERTO. YOU'RE A GUEST.
MISS HUNTER, IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU!
NOW THAT WE'RE HERE, WHY DON'T YOU KIDS ENJOY YOURSELVES.
YEAH, SHAN--LET'S BOOGIE!
I DO NOT KNOW HOW, TIM.
SO I'LL TEACH YOU!
AH THINK YOU AN' ME GOT THE SHORT END OF THE STICK, GIRL.
HEY, WHAT GIVES? YOU SPOT SOMETHING?!
GRRRRR!
THE BOY GLANCED STEVIE'S WAY ONLY FOR A MOMENT AND WHILE HIS EXPRESSION DIDN'T CHANGE, HIS SKIN HEAT PATTERNS DID, MARKEDLY.
THE INITIAL RESPONSE, RAHNE REGISTERS AS SHOCK--REPLACED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY BY FEAR.
IT WORKED!
RAHNE'S GOT HIM--*THERE!* THE BOY IN THE TURTLE-NECK!
WHAT--?!
IT CAN'T BE! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
PETER BRISTOW!
YOU KNOW!?! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE--
--BUT YOU *KNOW!!*

PETER, WAIT! LET'S TALK--

WHOULF!

NO! I WON'T LET YOU TAKE ME! I'LL *DIE* FIRST!

HE BREAKS FOR THE DOOR.

SEEING HER TEACHER-- AND FRIEND-- BRUTALLY SHOVED ASIDE...

... RAHNE MOVES TO HEAD HIM OFF...

...NOT CONSIDERING THE EFFECT...

...THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF A WOLF MIGHT HAVE ON THOSE AROUND HER

THE STUDENTS PANIC.

IN THE CONFUSION, SOME ARE TRAMPLED, SHAN AMONG THEM.

SHAN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

BRUISED, *ROBERT*, BUT UNBROKEN. WHERE IS PETER?!

HE BOLTED FOR THE PARKING LOT!

RAHNE'S HOT ON HIS TAIL!

PERHAPS I CAN POSSESS HIM-- STOP HIM-- BEFORE HE REACHES A CAR.

UNFORTUNATELY...

TIRES SCREAMING, PETER GUNS HIS CORVETTE ONTO THE STREET.

RAHNE'S POURIN' IT ON-- AH'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE MOVE THAT FAST-- BUT BRISTOW'S PULLIN' AWAY FROM HER.

SHE'S NO MATCH FOR A CAR.

BUT *AH* AM!

AH NEVER FIGURED OUR FREAK T' BE BRISTOW. HE WAS A NICE ENOUGH KID IN DANCE CLASS-- KIND'A SHY, BUT SINCE WHEN WAS THAT A CRIME?

CRIPES, THAT LADY CROSSIN' THE STREET--SHE HASN'T NOTICED BRISTOW...

...AN' HE HASN'T SEEN HER --OR, WORSE, DOESN'T CARE--

--'CAUSE HE AIN'T SLOWIN' DOWN!

IF THEY'RE GONNA BE SAVED--

--IT'S UP T' *ME!*

YYIII!

MOMMY!

NOW WHAT DO AH DO? MY PASSENGERS WON'T BE HURT WHEN AH LAND--THE SAME EFFECT THAT PROTECTS ME, PROTECTS THEM AS WELL-- BUT AH'LL TEAR UP THE STREET SOMETHIN' FIERCE!

SHOOT, NO!

THE ROAD TURNS UP AHEAD! AH'M HEADIN' STRAIGHT FOR THAT BUILDING!

AH'VE NEVER MADE A SUCCESSFUL TURN ON MY OWN BEFORE.

BUT THIS TIME AH GOTTA!

YEAH! YEAH!!

AH DID IT!

ZOOM

FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DOES ME. HOW THE HECK DO AH GET DOWN?!

CANNON-BALL.

Huh?! PROFESSOR X?!?

EXECUTE DANGER ROOM MANEUVER FOUR.

TRIGGER YOUR POWER IN SHORT BURSTS, TO SLOW YOUR DESCENT.

YOU MIGHT NOT MAKE THE SOFTEST OF LANDINGS, BUT IT SHOULD LEAVE YOU AND YOUR CHARGES FUNDAMENTALLY UNHURT.

=OUCH!=

HEY, LI'L DARLIN', DON'T CRY. YOUR MOMMA JUST FAINTED, SHE'LL BE FINE.

ME, AH FEEL LIKE *CHEERIN'*! AH SAVED Y'ALL, AN' AH DIDN'T SMASH ANYTHING IN THE PROCESS.

AH FINALLY DID SOMETHIN' *RIGHT!*

MEANWHILE, UP AHEAD...

THE TURN-- I CAN'T MAKE IT!

DANGER BLASTING

I'M SPINNING OUT!

THE CAR'S A WRECK--DAD'LL KILL ME!

I GOTTA GET AWAY. I'LL CUT THROUGH THE FACTORY, HITCH A RIDE TO NEW YORK--NO ONE'LL EVER FIND ME THERE!

AH SEE HIM!

HE JUST DUCKED INTO THAT DERELICT BUILDING!

CANNONBALL, YOU COVER THE FAR SIDE OF THE SITE, TO CUT OFF BRISTOW'S ESCAPE ROUTE!

WE'LL TRAP HIM BETWEEN US!

WAIT FOR ME-- AAIII!!

STEVIE!

IT'S MY BUM KNEE!

SUNSPOT, STAY WITH STEVIE.

KARMA-- NO!

WITH YOUR STRENGTH, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE OF US...

...WHO CAN PROPERLY DEAL WITH THAT FIRE.

WE DON'T NEED YOU TO FIND THE BOY, ROBERTO, WE *DO* NEED YOU OUT HERE.

I'M SORRY, ROBERTO. OF ALL THE TIMES FOR THIS TO GO WRONG.

INSIDE, RAHNE PADS SURELY, SILENTLY THROUGH THE DARKNESS -- EVERY SENSE KEENLY ALERT.

SHE'S NEVER FELT MORE ALIVE. AND IN THE DEEPEST RECESSES OF HER MIND, PART OF HER WISHES SHE COULD STAY THIS WAY FOREVER.

DANI CATCHES THAT WAYWARD THOUGHT, BUT SHE KEEPS IT TO HERSELF.

WE'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL. ACCORDING TO RAHNE...

...THE BOY'S TERRIFIED. IF WE CORNER HIM...

...ESPECIALLY IN THIS DUMP, ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN.

EH?!

DANIELLE--

--LOOK OUT!

SIMULTANEOUSLY...

THE FLAMES HAVEN'T REACHED THE FUEL TANK--I HAVE TO GET RID OF THE CAR BEFORE IT EXPLODES.

THE HEAT IS TREMENDOUS. I CAN FEEL IT EVEN THROUGH MY INSULATED UNIFORM.

I'VE LIFTED HEAVIER WEIGHTS, BUT BECAUSE OF THE FIRE, I CAN'T SEEM TO GET ANY DECENT LEVERAGE. THIS WON'T BE EASY.

I MUSTN'T WASTE MY STRENGTH, EITHER. MY POWER DERIVES FROM THE SUN, BUT I CAN ONLY STORE A LIMITED AMOUNT--AND, AT NIGHT, I CANNOT RECHARGE MYSELF.

THERE WE GO! THE DANGER IS PAST!

BOOM!

WH-WHERE DID *THAT* COME FROM?

BLESSED SAINTS--THE SHACK IS FILLED WITH *EXPLOSIVES!*

PROFESSOR XAVIER, IF YOU CAN HEAR MY THOUGHTS-- WARN THE OTHERS!

TNT

TNT

SUNSPOT IS NOT EXAGGERATING, KARMA, THE SITUATION IS GRAVE. A BLAST OF SUCH MAGNITUDE...

...MAY WELL DEMOLISH THE ENTIRE FACTORY!

WE'VE GOT TO LEAVE-- *NOW*-- BUT THAT WOULD MEAN CONDEMNING PETER TO CERTAIN DEATH!

HE DESERVES IT!

PERHAPS-- BUT IT IS NOT OUR PLACE TO PASS JUDGEMENT. VILLAIN OR NO, I WILL NOT ABANDON HIM-- *QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST,* WHAT IS THAT?!!

A SCREAM-- IT'S *RAHNE!*

LEGGO, YOU MONSTER! GET AWAY FROM ME!

I MUST BE CRAZY! YOU WERE A DOG WHEN I HIT YOU, NOW YOU'RE A GIRL!

BRISTOW-- *STOP!*

SEE TO RAHNE, DANI-- THAT IS A NASTY CUT ON HER FOREHEAD.

I HAVE POSSESSED PETER. HE WILL GIVE US NO MORE TROUBLE.

BUT THEN...

ROBERTO-- THE EQUIPMENT SHACK!

AS THE PROFESSOR WARNED, THE FACTORY IS *COLLAPSING!*

SHAN, *RUN FOR IT!*

I'LL SHIELD RAHNE'S BODY WITH MY OWN!

AN' LL TAKE CARE O' THE YOUNGSTER, PSYCHE.

CANNONBALL?!

YOU LADIES FOLLOW ME, FAST AS YOU CAN...

...WHILE AH PUNCH US A WAY *OUTTA* THIS MESS!

I CANNOT MOVE AS QUICKLY AS NORMAL WHILE POSSESSING SOMEONE, BUT I DARE NOT RELEASE CONTROL OF PETER. HE IS SO DISTRAUGHT, I FEAR HE MAY TRY TO KILL HIMSELF.

BUT I DO NOT WANT TO HOLD DANI BACK AS WELL.

HURRY, DANIELLE! WE WILL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

STUFF IT, SHAN. WE GO TOGETHER, OR NOT AT ALL!

LOOK! ROBERTO'S BEEN KEEPING SAM'S TUNNEL CLEAR FOR US!

IT SEEMS MY MUSCLES ARE OF SOME USE TO YOU AFTER ALL, *EH*, SHAN?

BUT EVEN I HAVE MY LIMITS-- AND I'M AFRAID I'VE NEARLY REACHED THEM.

HE WAITS 'TIL EVERYONE IS OUT, THEN WAITS A LITTLE LONGER TO MAKE SURE THEY'RE A SAFE DISTANCE AWAY, BEFORE...

HIT THE DIRT, *AMIGOS!*

BWHOOM!

STEVIE'S APARTMENT...

WE WANT TO HELP YOU, PETER. I WANT TO UNDERSTAND WHY YOU MADE MY LIFE A NIGHTMARE. WHY WON'T YOU COOPERATE, WHY ARE YOU FORCING ME TO CALL THE POLICE? IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?

YOU CAN'T PROVE ANYTHING.

WRONG. WE HAVE RECORDINGS OF YOUR VOICE AND THE CALLER'S, PLUS AN ELECTRONICS VOICEPRINT ANALYSIS THAT SAYS THEY'RE IDENTICAL.

WHAT'LL YOUR PARENTS SAY WHEN THEY FIND OUT ABOUT THIS, *HMMM*?

NO!

YOU MUSTN'T TELL THEM, PLEASE, MISS HUNTER!

PETER, WHAT IS IT, WHAT'S WRONG?

JUST LEAVE THEM OUT OF THIS, OKAY?

THE BOY IS IN NEAR-MORTAL TERROR, A FEAR SO GREAT IT BLOCKS MY PSI-SCANS.

I SUGGEST YOU NEW MUTANTS UTILIZE YOUR OWN ABILITIES.

"...TO GET TO THE ROOT OF PETER'S PROBLEM."

THE PROF MEANS *ME*, AND MY ABILITY TO REACH INTO PEOPLE'S HEADS AN' PULL OUT 3-D IMAGES OF THEIR GREATEST DREAM OR NIGHTMARE.

I WONDER, THOUGH-- IS THAT RIGHT?

SHOULDN'T PEOPLE BE ALLOWED THE PRIVACY OF THEIR OWN THOUGHTS? I WANT TO PUNISH PETER, BUT NOT LIKE THIS.

AND YET, PROFESSOR XAVIER KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING-- HE ALWAYS DOES-- HE WOULDN'T ASK WITHOUT GOOD REASON.

PETER WHIMPERS AS DANI'S MIND TOUCHES HIS...

...THEN HE SHRIEKS IN INCOHERENT RAGE...

...AS HIS HEART'S DESIRE IS REVEALED FOR ALL TO SEE.

IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT-- A STUDENT HAVING A CRUSH ON HIS TEACHER?

PETER, YOU HAVE A VERY STRANGE WAY OF SHOWING AFFECTION.

DANI REACHES DEEPER...

...AND FANTASY GIVES WAY TO PETER'S DAILY REALITY.

THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, PETER. YOU'LL THANK ME FOR IT WHEN YOU'RE OLDER.

Y-YES, POP.

MON, AH MON! THEY ARE HIS PARENTS, HOW COULD THEY DO SUCH THINGS?!

DANI, BREAK CONTACT. WE'VE SEEN ENOUGH.

ROBERTO, I...CAN'T...

...THE IMAGES ...TOO STRONG...

YOU LITTLE WITCH! I'LL KILL YOU FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE!

GLORY--!?!

SAM, SOMEBODY-- GRAB HIM!

I HAVE HIM UNDER MY CONTROL.

DID HE INJURE YOU, DANI?

NOPE. THAT IS, APART FROM...

...SCARING ME HALF TO DEATH.

ANYTHING HE DOES TO US WON'T MATTER BEANS COMPARED TO WHAT'S ALREADY BEEN DONE TO HIM.

LOOK AT HIS BACK.

....BULLPEN BULLETINS....

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Yes, I know it's well into 1983 as you read this, but it's being written on December 27th, 1982. We had a great year last year — our best ever, in fact, — which means that we *must* have been making more of you happy than ever before, and that's what really counts.

We're looking forward to another outrageous and wonderful year of legend-making, and all of us here wish the best of everything to all of you in the New Year!

BY THE WAY...

Contrary to rumors you may have heard, Marvel's sales went up again in 1982! Don't be misled! The simple fact is that we're number one, we outsell our nearest competitor better than *two to one*, and our lead *grew* in '82! Quoth Shakespeare, "Truth will out." Quoth Shooter, "The good guys are winning!" Quoth Stan Lee, "Excelsior!"

I WISH YOU'D BEEN HERE!

What a Christmas party we had last Wednesday! It was a who' s who of comics, with mountains of food, oceans of drink, crazy, funny presents for all (plus some truly beautiful gifts) and live music by *The Burning Sensations*! We danced and carried on far into the night. I thought you might like to see our party invitation, created by topnotch assistant editor (and strange person) Mike Carlin.

SURE, YOU'LL COME TO THE MIGHTY MARVEL FREELANCERS' CHRISTMAS PARTY! OR ELSE...
CHRISTMAS PARTY! WEDNESDAY DEC. 22, 1982 AT THE BULLPEN !!!!! 3:00 PM - ???
...I'LL GIVE YA A TASTE A MY SANTA CLAWS, BUB!
SWIPE!
CLAW!

I could talk about the party for hours, but suffice it to say that about a hundred and fifty of the finest people on Earth had a world-record, no-holds-barred, great time. If there was a world record for togetherness and Christmas spirit, we'd have broken that, too.

When I said I wish you'd been here, I meant it — and somehow, some way, I'm going to arrange for a few of you folks out there to join us for next year's Christmas party. Maybe we'll have a contest or a drawing or something — I'm not sure yet. Watch this column for details.

DO WE DARE? SURE...

Not long ago, a reporter from the New York Times was here to interview me and Marvel top exec Jim Galton about Marvel's spectacular growth and success over the last several years, especially astounding (to *him*) because of the bad economy. After the interview we chatted informally. He wondered, since our super-hero comics are so popular, why we're trying out wild, new things like *U.S. 1*, *Crystar*, and our new, as yet untitled, romance series. Why not just crank out more standard super-hero fare? Hmm. Well, first of all, I told him, I don't think we publish *any* "standard super-hero fare". If there's a "typical" Marvel comic I don't know what it is. I mean *Ka-zar, the Savage* sure isn't anything like *The Amazing Spider-Man* — or anything else under the sun, for that matter. *Star Wars* isn't like *Conan, the Barbarian*, which isn't remotely like *The Fantastic Four*, which isn't like *The Defenders*, which, let's face it, is downright *bizarre*. Have we ever done *anything* "typical"? *Dazzler* sure isn't a typical comic book — I mean, the lead character wants to be a *singer*, not a crime-fighter or a heroine — and it's the number one female-lead comics publication in the land... by *far*! So I said, as I see it we're just doing what we've always done — defying convention, trying outrageous things, daring to let creativity run wild. He wondered whether or not the fact that there are already toys on the market would give an enormous boost to *U.S. 1* and *Crystar*. Frankly, I don't know and I don't care. People come to us constantly asking us to create comics series based on their TV shows, their toys, their movies, or whatever. Most of them we turn away — but once in a while, we'll be inspired by what they show us and we'll come up with a series idea based on their stuff that we think is great. We evaluate these ideas *as if there were no tie-in*, no extra exposure or publicity to be gained from their movie, TV show or toy advertising. We only go ahead with such a series if we think we've got something *great*. That way, if we're *right*, and we do a good job, we'll have a success we can really be proud of — the movie, toy ads or TV exposure is just an extra little plus. Let's face it, part of the joy of reading the *Star Wars* comic is the thrill of garnering tiny hints and clues about the next movie. If you're too old (or too young) to appreciate such things, then it won't matter that there may be toys on the market relating to your favorite series... but for those of us who like them, it's nice to have toys, models and such available. Is their anyone out there who doesn't have an Artoo-Deetoo wind-up figure, a G.I. Joe tank model, or, perhaps, a Spider-Man video game?

The fact is that bad ideas, or badly executed series won't make it — no matter what the source of the inspiration, and no matter how much extra promotion and publicity there might be. But *good* ideas, made into good series will be popular and will succeed — no matter where the ideas come from, nd matter whether or not they're extra-heavily promoted, *and no matter how outrageous or ground-breaking they might be!*

Yeah, but *U.S. 1*? A story about a *truck driver*?

Pretty different. A gamble? Sure. But, yeah, we dare.

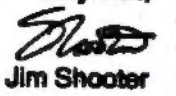
Besides, you'll tell us if we blow it. You always do.

MOVING RIGHT ALONG...

Time to get back to Editor in Chief-type, high-level decision making.

Hmm. What *do* I want for lunch?

Stay well,



Jim Shooter

THE HYPE BOX

GHOST RIDER #81 — It's the last issue of Johnny Blaze's title, and we mean the *last*! This double-sized keg of dynamite features the final conflict between Blaze and his demonic alter ego! And, while we don't want to give too much away, we *will* tell you this: you will never again see the Ghost Rider after this issue! Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS, with pencils by BOB BUDIANSKY and inks by DANNY BULANADI and KEVIN DZUBAN.

ROM #43 — Rom's greatest wish is realized: he is no longer imprisoned in his spaceknight armor. He has become Rom, the *man*! But as a man, he can now die — and Dr. Dredd is gonna try to see to it that he does! Written by BILL MANTLO, with art by SAL BUSCEMA, IAN AKIN and BRIAN GARVEY.

WHAT IF #28 — It's the Hyborian Age, and its greatest adventurer, **Conan the Barbarian**, comes face-to-face with a contentious visitor from our time — the Norse god of thunder, son of Odin — the mighty Thor! Be here for the landmark meeting between these two great mythological figures. Brought to you by ALAN ZELENETZ, RON WILSON and SAM De La ROSA.

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

- ☐ **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #100** — The Thing, and... Ben Grimm?! Double-sized last issue (Next month: THE THING #1)
- ☐ **KA-ZAR #26** — Special wraparound *photo-cover*
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #196**
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #4**
- ☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #50** — *Double-sized last issue!*
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #241**
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #282**
- ☐ **THOR #332**
- ☐ **GHOST RIDER #81** — *Double-sized last issue! (See Hype Box)*
- ☐ **INDIANA JONES #6** — Art by HOWARD CHAYKIN and TERRY AUSTIN
- ☐ **U.S. 1 #2**
- ☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE #59**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #284**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #232**
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #147**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #152** — Reprinting Amazing Spider-Man #14 by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO, featuring the first appearance of the *Green Goblin*
- ☐ **X-MEN # 170**
- ☐ **ROM #43** — See Hype Box
- ☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #84**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #12**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #255**
- ☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #130** — Spider-Man, the Vision and the Scarlet Witch.
- ☐ **IRON MAN #171**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #75**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #120**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #72**
- ☐ **MASTER OF KUNG FU #125** — *Double-sized last issue!*
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #6**
- ☐ **WHAT IF #28** — Featuring Conan and Thor — together! (See Hype Box)

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #82**
- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #3**
- ☐ **BLIP #2**

EPIC COMICS

- ☐ **COYOTE #1**

SPECIAL EVENTS

- ☐ **WARLOCK #6** — The conclusion of the saga of Adam Warlock!

MERCIFUL HEAVEN, SOME OF THOSE WELTS ARE FRESH, BUT OTHERS ARE SCARS--YEARS OLD!
SHAN, RELEASE YOUR HOLD ON HIM.
PETER WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME.
I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS.
YOU'VE GOT YOUR POUND OF FLESH, ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?!
CALL THE COPS--CALL MY FOLKS--I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!
YOUR PARENTS--DID THIS?!? DO THEY HATE YOU SO MUCH?
DON'T BE, STUPID, THEY DON'T HATE ME AT ALL.
THEY *LOVE* ME.
IT'S JUST, I'M A *BAD* BOY.
I NEED TO BE *PUNISHED*.
WHEN I STARTED DANCING, MISS HUNTER, I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD. I COULDN'T HELP LOVING YOU.
YOU SAID YOU LIKED ME--BUT WHEN YOU WOULDN'T PUNISH ME, NO MATTER WHAT I DID, I FIGURED YOU WERE LYING, THAT YOU REALLY DIDN'T CARE. 'CAUSE IF YOU LOVED ME, YOU'D HIT ME.
I WANTED TO GET EVEN.
I'M SORRY, MISS HUNTER.
I'M SO SORRY.

XAVIER ARRIVES WITHIN THE HOUR. AFTER TELEPATHICALLY "EDITING" PETER'S MEMORIES TO REMOVE ALL AWARENESS OF THE NEW MUTANTS—

--HE SUMMONS AN AMBULANCE AND PLACES A CALL TO THE CHILD WELFARE BUREAU.

PETER WILL SPEND THE NEXT FEW DAYS IN HOSPITAL. AFTER HIS RELEASE, THOUGH, IT COULD BE A LONG TIME, IF EVER, BEFORE HE'S RETURNED TO HIS PARENTS' CUSTODY.

I'M REMINDED OF THE OLD SAYING: "YOU ALWAYS HURT THE ONE YOU LOVE!" I WISH IT WEREN'T TRUE...

...BUT IT SO OFTEN IS.

WHAT WILL BECOME OF PETER, PROFESSOR?

AMBULANCE

IT'S DIFFICULT TO SAY, RAHNE. THE PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO HIS BODY CAN BE SPEEDILY PUT RIGHT. THE PROGNOSIS ON HIS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL WOUNDS IS NOWHERE NEAR AS CERTAIN.

HOPEFULLY, HE'LL BE PLACED IN A FOSTER HOME. HE'LL UNDERGO THERAPY--

--WHICH I'LL ASSIST IN. GIVEN TIME, HE MAY BE CURED.

IT'S A SLIM CHANCE AT BEST, BUT THE FACT THAT HE HAS EVEN THAT MUCH IS THANKS TO YOU. WITHOUT YOUR INTERVENTION, HE MIGHT WELL HAVE ESCAPED TO REPEAT THE PATTERN OF HIS YOUTH WITH HIS OWN FAMILY...

...PERPETUATING THIS TERRIBLE CYCLE OF CHILD ABUSE.

IF YOU EVER WISH A JUSTIFICATION FOR WHO AND WHAT AND WHY YOU ARE--BOTH AS HUMAN BEINGS AND MUTANTS--THIS IS IT. NOT FIGHTING VILLAINS OR EVIL MUTANTS, BUT SIMPLY HELPING PEOPLE.

HOWEVER, BEFORE YOU GET TOO PLEASED WITH YOURSELVES, I WANT AN ANALYSIS OF TONIGHT'S INCIDENT--

--WHAT WAS DONE RIGHT, AND WRONG, AND HOW YOUR PERFORMANCE COULD HAVE BEEN IMPROVED--READY FOR TOMORROW'S CLASS.

PRIDE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH PROFICIENCY AND, HAVING SEEN YOU ALL IN ACTION...

THE MAN HAS A POINT, KIDS, BUT FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH--

...I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE A LOT TO LEARN.

--T'ME, YOU DONE GOOD, REAL GOOD.

NEXT ISSUE • VIPER & THE SILVER SAMURAI!

MINUTEMEN

Quick STOP

RST